

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A stirred tank for storing a part of yeast slurry discharged from fermentation tanks where beer is fermented, and then returning the part of yeast slurry to the fermentation tanks for reuse, comprising a stirring impeller ~~vertically positioned~~ made up of vertically oriented surfaces with no slanting surface and positioned within the stirred tank and so constructed that a maximum diameter of a rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 60-90% of the inner diameter of the stirred tank, and the height of the rotation body is 70% or more of a depth of the part of yeast slurry stored in the stirred tank.

Claim 2 (original): A stirred tank according to claim 1, wherein the maximum diameter of the rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 70-90% of the inner diameter of the stirred tank.

Claim 3 (previously presented): A stirred tank according to claim 1, wherein the height of the rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 90-120% of the depth of the yeast slurry.

Claim 4 (currently amended): A method of manufacturing beer including the process of storing in a stirred tank a part of yeast slurry discharged from fermentation tanks where beer is fermented, and then returning the part of yeast slurry from the stirred tank to the fermentation tanks for reuse, comprising:

providing a stirring impeller ~~vertically positioned~~ made up of vertically oriented surfaces with no slanting surface and positioned within the stirred tank and so constructed that a maximum diameter of a rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is

60-90% of the inner diameter of the stirred tank, and the height of the rotation body is 70% or more of a depth of the part of yeast slurry stored in the stirred tank; and

stirring the yeast slurry by rotating the stirring impeller at a rotational speed of 1-30 rpm.

Claim 5 (previously presented): A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 4, wherein the maximum diameter of the rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 70-90% of the inner diameter of the stirred tank.

Claim 6 (previously presented): A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 4, wherein the height of the rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 90-120% of the depth of the yeast slurry.

Claim 7 (previously presented): A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 4, wherein the stirring impeller is rotated at a rotational speed of 1-20 rpm.

Claim 8 (canceled)

Claim 9 (previously presented): A stirred tank according to claim 2, wherein the height of the rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 90-120% of the depth of the yeast slurry.

Claim 10 (previously presented): A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 5, wherein the height of the rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 90-120% of the depth of the yeast slurry.

Claim 11 (previously presented): A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 5, wherein the stirring impeller is rotated at a rotational speed of 1-20 rpm.

Claim 12 (previously presented): A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 6, wherein the stirring impeller is rotated at a rotational speed of 1-20 rpm.

Claim 13 (previously presented): A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 10, wherein the stirring impeller is rotated at a rotational speed of 1-20 rpm.

Claim 14 (currently amended): A stirred tank for storing yeast slurry, comprising a stirring impeller having at least one vertically surfaced paddle blade with no slanting surface within the stirred tank, wherein the stirring impeller has rotation which defines a rotation body, the rotation body has a maximum diameter which is 60-90% of the inner diameter of the stirred tank, and the rotation body has a height which is 70% or more of a depth of the yeast slurry stored in the stirred tank.

Claim 15 (currently amended): A method of fermenting yeast slurry, comprising:
providing a stirring impeller having at least one vertically surfaced paddle blade with no slanting surface within a stirred tank; and
rotating the stirring impeller at a rotational speed of 1-30 rpm,
wherein the stirring impeller has rotation which defines a rotation body, the rotation body has a maximum diameter which is 60-90% of the inner diameter of the stirred tank, and the rotation body has a height which is 70% or more of a depth of the yeast slurry stored in the stirred tank.

Claim 16 (new): A stirred tank according to claim 1, wherein the stirring impeller has no hole or opening.

Claim 17 (new): A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 4, wherein the stirring impeller has no hole or opening.

Claim 18 (new): A stirred tank for storing a part of yeast slurry discharged from fermentation tanks where beer is fermented, and then returning the part of yeast slurry to the fermentation tanks for reuse, comprising a stirring impeller including vertically flat surfaced paddle blades with no slanting surfaces, the stirring impeller being positioned within the

stirred tank and so constructed that a maximum diameter of a rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 60-90% of the inner diameter of the stirred tank, and the height of the rotation body is 70% or more of a depth of the part of yeast slurry stored in the stirred tank.

Claim 19 (new): A method of manufacturing beer including the process of storing in a stirred tank a part of yeast slurry discharged from fermentation tanks where beer is fermented, and then returning the part of yeast slurry from the stirred tank to the fermentation tanks for reuse, comprising:

providing a stirring impeller including vertically flat surfaced paddle blades with no slanting surface, the stirring impeller being positioned within the stirred tank and so constructed that a maximum diameter of a rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 60-90% of the inner diameter of the stirred tank, and the height of the rotation body is 70% or more of a depth of the part of yeast slurry stored in the stirred tank; and

stirring the yeast slurry by rotating the stirring impeller at a rotational speed of 1-30 rpm.